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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 SCS-06 CA-01 L-03 H-01 SY-05
USSS-00 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 INR-10 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 /086 W

-----074726 212028Z /46

P 211850Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5011

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(☒) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

~~Declassify~~ () In Part (☒) In Full **DECONTROL**

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

[REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES 2101

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, AR
SUBJECT: 40 JEHOVAHS WITNESSES DETAINED IN
POLICE RAID IN MAR DEL PLATA

REF: BUENOS AIRES 1261

1. AN UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF JEHOVAHS WITNESSES
WERE ROUNDED UP IN A POLICE RAID IN MAR DEL PLATA
MARCH 19 AND DETAINED IN LOCAL POLICE HEADQUARTERS.
ACCORDING TO TODAY'S PRESS REPORTS (MARCH 21), THE
DETAINEES HAVE APPEARED BEFORE A FEDERAL JUDGE.
THEY ARE CHARGED WITH VIOLATING A GOVERNMENT BAN WHICH
PROHIBITS THEM FROM PRACTICING THEIR RELIGION IN
ARGENTINA.

2. ORIGINAL PRESS REPORTS SAID THAT SOME 40 WITNESSES
WERE PICKED UP IN A SPECTACULAR POLICE RAID ON A HOUSE
WHERE THE GROUP WAS ATTENDING A RELIGIOUS CONFERENCE.
THE POLICE WERE HEAVILY ARMED BUT THERE WAS APPARENTLY
NO VIOLENCE. THE POLICE REPORTEDLY CONFISCATED
SIZEABLE QUANTITIES OF WITNESSES LITERATURE, INCLUDING
MATERIAL PRINTED IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES, IN THE HOUSE.

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3. A U.S. WITNESSES REPRESENTATIVE TOLD EMBOFF TODAY THAT HE
HAD NO INFORMATION ON THE INCIDENT BUT THAT HE DOUBTED THE
NUMBER OF WITNESSES EXCEEDED 15 OR 20 IN A FAMILY GATHERING.

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HE ACKNOWLEDGED THE GROUP'S MEETING FELL TECHNICALLY WITHIN
THE ACTIVITIES BANNED BY THE GOVERNMENT.
CASTRO

[REDACTED]

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